"Only a God Can Save Us": The *Spiegel* Interview (1966)

Martin Heidegger

[Although Heidegger was one of the seminal thinkers of the twentieth century, few such men of his time were criticized more severely or resented more bitterly than he. Much of this criticism arose because of an association with the Nazis while Rector of the University of Freiburg, 1933-34, one that publicly he neither repudiated, justified, nor explained. In 1966 the editors of the German news weekly, Der Spiegel, *requested of Heidegger an interview to discuss these issues. In granting the interview, which took place on September 23, 1966, Heidegger insisted that it remain unpublished during his lifetime. (It appeared in* Der Spiegel *on May 31, 1976, five days after his death.) Its substance goes far beyond the personal issues involved and rephrases his entire philosophical experience. He saw this as an opportunity to meditate upon the meaning of Being, particularly under the guise that most profoundly characterizes contemporary culture—labeled by him "technicity"* (die Technik). *In these terms the interview takes on the quality of a last will and testament.*

In the translation which follows I have inserted the pagination of the German publication, Der Spiegel, *Nr. 23 (1976), 193-219, directly into the text in brackets. I was assisted in historical matters by the researches of Dr. Kurt Maier of the Leo Baeck Institute, New York City.*

—William J. Richardson, S.J.]

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SPIEGEL: Professor Heidegger, we have noted repeatedly that your philosophical work has been overshadowed somewhat by [certain] events of short duration in your life that you never have clarified.

Heidegger: You mean 1933?

SPIEGEL: Yes, [both] before and after. We would like to set this in a larger context and thus arrive at certain questions that seem to us important, namely: what possibilities does philosophy offer for having an influence upon actuality (*Wirklichkeit*)—even upon politicial actuality?

Heidegger: These are indeed important questions, whether or not I can answer them. But first I must say that before my rectorate I was in no way politically active.[1] During the winter semester of 1932-33 I was on leave and spent most of the time in my mountain hut.[2]

SPIEGEL: How did it happen, then, that you became Rector of the University of Freiburg?

Heidegger: In December, 1932, my neighbor, Professor (of Anatomy) von Möllendorf, was chosen Rector. The installation of the new Rector here takes place on April 15. During the winter semester of 1932-33, we discussed the [current] situation often, not only the political one, but especially that of the universities and the partially hopeless situation of the students. My judgment went like this: to the extent that I can judge things, the only possibility still available [to us] is to try to seize upon the approaching developments with those constructive forces that still remain alive.

SPIEGEL: You saw, then, a relationship between the position of the German University and the political situation of Germany as a whole?

Heidegger: To be sure, I did follow the political events of January-March, 1933, and also spoke about them from time to time with younger colleagues. My own work, however, was concerned with a more comprehensive interpretation of [196] pre-Socratic thought. With the beginning of the summer semester I returned to Freiburg.[3] Meanwhile, Professor von Möllendorf had assumed the office as Rector on April 16. Hardly two weeks later he was removed from office by the then Minister of Culture of Baden. What presumably gave the desired occasion for this decision of the Minister was the fact that the Rector had forbidden the so-called "Jewish poster" to be displayed in the University.[4]

SPIEGEL: Mr. von Möllendorf was a Social Democrat. What did he do after his dismissal?[5]

Heidegger: On the very day of his dismissal, von Möllendorf came to me and said: "Heidegger, now you must take over the rectorate." I protested that I had absolutely no administrative experience. However, the Pro-Rector at the time, Professor (of Theology) Sauer, also urged me to become a candidate in the new election, for there was a real danger that otherwise a [mere] functionary would be named Rector. Younger colleagues with whom for several years I had discussed questions of university management besieged me [with requests] to take over the rectorate. I hesitated a long time. Finally, I declared myself ready to take over the office only in the interests in the University, provided I could be certain of the unanimous support of the entire Academic Senate. Meantime, the doubts about my qualifications for the rectorate remained, so that on the very morning of the election I went to the Rector's office and told the dismissed colleague, von Möllendorf, and the Pro-Rector, Sauer, that I could not take over the office. Both replied that the election already had proceeded so far that at that point I could no longer withdraw from the candidacy.

SPIEGEL: And so you declared yourself definitively ready. What form, then did your relationship to the National Socialists take?

Heidegger: On the second day after I took office the "Student Leader" and two companions appeared at my door and demanded once more that the "Jewish poster" be displayed. I refused. The three students left with the remark that my prohibition would be made known to the Student Leadership Division of the government. Several days later a telephone call came from Dr. Baumann, S.A. Group Leader in the office of Higher Education of the Supreme S.A. Command.[6] He demanded the hanging of the poster in question, as this already had been done in other universities. Should I refuse, I could expect my own dismissal, if not, indeed, the closure of the University. I tried to gain the support of the Minister of Culture of Baden for my prohibition. He explained that he could do nothing against the S.A. Nonetheless, I did not retract my prohibition.

SPIEGEL: Up to now, this was not known in that way.

Heidegger: The motive that above all determined me to take over the rectorate was mentioned already in my inaugural lecture at Freiburg in 1929, "What is Metaphysics?"[7] "The fields of sciences lie far apart. The manner of handling their objects is essentially different. This disintegrated multiplicity of disciplines is held together today only through the technical organization of universities and faculties, and through the practical direction of the disciplines according to a single orientation. At the same time, the rooting of the sciences in their essential ground has become dead." What I attempted to do during my administration, in view of this condition of the universities—in our own day degenerated to the extreme—is laid out in my rectoral address.[8]

SPIEGEL: We are trying to find out whether, and how, this statement of 1929 coincides with what you said in your inaugural address as Rector in 1933. We take here one sentence out of context: "The much celebrated 'academic freedom' is repudiated by the German university; for this freedom was not genuine, insofar as it was only [a] negative [one]." There seems good reason to infer that this statement at the very least gives expression to certain conceptions that even today are not foreign to you.

Heidegger: Yes, I agree, for this academic "freedom" was only too often a negative one: freedom *from* the effort to surrender oneself to what a scientific study demands in terms of reflection and meditation. Moreover, the sentence that you have excerpted ought not to be taken alone but read in its context, for then it becomes clear what I wanted to have understood by "negative freedom."

SPIEGEL: Fine, that is understandable. But we seem to perceive a new tone in your rectoral discourse, when, four months after Hitler's designation as Chancellor, you there talk about the "greatness and glory of this new era *(Aufbruch)*."

Heidegger: Yes, I was also convinced of it.

SPIEGEL: Could you explain that a little further?

Heidegger: Gladly. At that time I saw no other alternative. Amid the general confusion of opinion and political tendencies of 22 parties, it was necessary to find a national and, above all, social attitude, somewhat in the sense of Friederich Naumann's endeavor. I could cite here, simply by way of example, a passage from Eduard Spranger that goes far beyond my rectoral address.[9]

SPIEGEL: When did you begin to become involved in political affairs? The 22 parties were long since there. Already in 1930 there were millions of unemployed.

Heidegger: At that time I was still completely preoccupied with the questions that were developed in *Being and Time* (1927)[10] and the writings and lectures of the following years—fundamental questions of thought that touched also national and social questions [though not im]mediately. Immediately what faced me as a university professor was the question about the meaning of the sciences, and with it the determination of the mission of the university. This concern is expressed in the title of my rectoral discourse, "The Self-Assertion of the German University." No other rectoral discourse of the time bore a title as audacious as this. But who among those who attack this discourse has read it carefully, thought it through, and interpreted it in terms of the situation at that time?

SPIEGEL: Self-assertion of the university in such a turbulent world—isn't that a bit much?

Heidegger: Why? "The Self-Assertion of the University" went against the so-called "political science" that at that time was already demanded by the Party and by the National Socialist Student Organization. "Political science" at that time had a completely different sense; it did not signify "the science of politics" as we know it today, but meant: science as such—its meaning and value—is appraised according to its practical utility for the people. Opposition to *this* politicizing of science is directly expressed in the rectoral discourse.

SPIEGEL: Let us make sure we understand you correctly: insofar as you led the University into what you experienced at that time as a new era, you wanted to affirm the University against otherwise overwhelming tendencies that no longer would have left to the University its proper function?

Heidegger: Exactly. But at the same time the self-assertion had to assume the task of winning back a new meaning for the University, in opposition to its merely technical organization, through a reflection upon the tradition of Western European thought.

SPIEGEL: Should we understand this to mean, Professor, that at the time you thought that you could bring about the restitution of the University in conjunction with the National Socialists?

Heidegger: That is the wrong way to put it. Not "in conjunction with the National Socialists," but the University ought to renew itself through a reflection all its own and thereby gain a firm position against the danger of the politicizing of science—in the sense that I just mentioned.

SPIEGEL: And for that reason you proclaimed in your rectoral discourse these three supporting columns: "service by labor," "service under arms," "service through knowledge." Accordingly, "service through knowledge," or so you thought anyway, was to be raised to a position equal [to the others] that the National Socialists had not conceded to it?

Heidegger: It is not a matter of "supporting columns." If you read [the text] carefully, service through knowledge stands in third place numerically, to be sure, but in terms of its meaning it is placed first. The task remains to consider how labor and the bearing of arms, like every human activity, are grounded in knowledge and illumined by it.

SPIEGEL: But we must mention here another statement—we are soon finished with these distressing citations—that we cannot imagine you would subscribe to today. You said in the fall of 1933: "Let not doctrines and ideas be the rules of your Being. The Führer, himself and he alone, is today and for the future German actuality and its law."

Heidegger: These sentences do not appear in the rectoral discourse but only in a local Freiburg student newspaper at the beginning of the winter semester of 1933-34. When I took over the rectorate, it was clear to me that I would not survive without compromises. The sentences you quote I would no longer write today. Such things as that I stopped saying by 1934.

SPIEGEL: May we throw in again another question? So far in this interview it has become clear that your position in 1933 oscillated between two poles. In the first place: You had to say many things *ad usum Delphini*.[11] This was one pole. The other pole, however, was much more positive, and this you express as follows: I had the feeling that here was something novel, here was a new era.

Heidegger: That's it exactly. Not that I spoke for the sake of mere appearances—I saw this as the one possibility.

SPIEGEL: You know that in this context several accusations have been made

against you that concern your cooperation with the Nazi Party and its organizations, and these still persist in the public mind as undenied. Thus, you are accused of having taken part in the book burnings of the student body, or of the Hitler Youth.

Heidegger: I forbade the planned book-burning that was scheduled to take place in front of the University building.

SPIEGEL: Then you are accused of having books of Jewish authors removed from the library of the [199] University or from the Philosophical Seminar.[12]

Heidegger: As Director of the Seminar, I had jurisdiction only over the Seminar Library. I did not comply with repeated demands that the books of Jewish authors be removed. Former participants in my seminars can testify today to the fact that not only were no books of Jewish authors withdrawn but that these authors, above all, Husserl, were cited and discussed just as [they were] before 1933.

SPIEGEL: How do you explain the origin of such rumors? Is it malice?

Heidegger: According to my knowledge of the sources, I would like to assume that, but the reasons for the calumny lie deeper. My taking over the rectorate was probably only the occasion for it, not the determining cause. For that reason the polemic probably will flare up again and again whenever the occasion is offered.

SPIEGEL: Even after 1933 you had Jewish students. Your relationship to some of these Jewish students is supposed to have been cordial.

Heidegger: My attitude after 1933 remained unchanged. One of my oldest and most gifted students, Helene Weiss, who later emigrated to Scotland, took her degree in Basel (after continued study at Freiburg became impossible) with a work on *Causality and Chance in the Philosophy of Aristotle* (Basel, 1942). At the end of the foreword, the author writes: "The attempt at a phenomenological interpretation that we present here in Part I owes its possibility to M. Heidegger's unpublished interpretation of Greek philosophy." You see here a copy with a dedication of the author. I visited Dr. Weiss several times in Brussels before her death.

SPIEGEL: You were friendly for a long time with Karl Jaspers. After 1933, this relationship began to deteriorate. Rumor has it that the deterioration must be seen in conjunction with the fact that Jaspers had a Jewish wife. Would you like to say something about that?

Heidegger: My friendship with Jaspers began in 1919. I visited him and his wife during the summer semester of 1933 in Heidelberg. He sent me all his publications between 1934 and 1938 "with heartfelt greetings."

SPIEGEL: You were a student of Edmund Husserl, your Jewish predecessor in the chair of philosophy at the University of Freiburg. He had recommended you to the Faculty as his successor in that chair. Your relationship to him cannot have been without gratitude.

Heidegger: You know, of course, the dedication of *Being and Time*.

SPIEGEL: But later the relationship deteriorated. Can you, and do you want to, tell us what led to this?

Heidegger: The differences in matters of substance became sharper. In the beginning of the 1930's Husserl had a public reckoning with Max Scheler and me, the explicitness of which left little to the imagination. What moved Husserl to oppose my thought in such public fashion I was unable to learn.

SPIEGEL: What was the occasion for this?

Heidegger: Husserl spoke to the students in the Berlin Sportspalast. Erich Mühsam reported it in one of the large Berlin newspapers.[13]

SPIEGEL: The controversy as such is of no interest to us at the moment. Of interest only is that there was no controversy [between you] that had anything to do with the year 1933.

Heidegger: Not the slightest.

SPIEGEL: You have been criticized for the fact that in the publication of the fifth edition of *Being and Time* (1941) the original dedication to Husserl was omitted.

Heidegger: That's right. I explained this affair in my book *On the Way to Language*.[14] There I wrote: "To counter widely circulated allegations, let it be stated here explicitly that the dedication of *Being and Time*. . . remained in *Being and Time* until its fourth edition of 1935. In 1941, when my publishers felt that the fifth edition might be endangered and that, indeed, the book might be suppressed, it was finally agreed, on the suggestion and at the desire of Niemeyer[15], that the dedication be omitted from the edition, however, on the condition imposed by me, that the note to page 38 be retained—a note which in fact states the reason for that dedication, and which runs: "If the following investigation has taken any steps forward in disclosing the 'things themselves,' the author must first of all thank E. Husserl, who, by providing his own incisive personal guidance and by freely turning over his unpublished investigations, familiarized the author with the most diverse areas of phenomenological research during his student years in Freiburg." (*Being and Time*, [New York: Harper and Row, 1962] p. 489.)

SPIEGEL: Then we hardly need to raise the question whether it is correct that as Rector of the University of Freiburg you forbade the retired Husserl access to, or use of, the University library or the library of the Philosophical Seminar.

Heidegger: That is a calumny.

SPIEGEL: And there is no letter in which this prohibition against Husserl is contained? How, then, did such a rumor start?

Heidegger: I don't know either. I have no explanation for it. The impossibility of the whole thing can be shown by another little-known fact. During my rectorate I went before the Minister of Culture and defended the Director of the Medical Clinic, Professor Thannhauser, and the later Nobel Laureate, Professor (of Physical Chemistry) von Hevesy—both Jews—whom

the Ministry gave orders to be dismissed. That I supported these men and at the same time took shabby action against Husserl, a retired professor and my own teacher, is absurd. I also prevented the students and teachers from organizing a demonstration [201] against Professor Thannhauser. At that time there were [some young] instructors waiting [for a formal appointment] who thought: now is the time for advancement. When these people presented their case to me, I turned them all away.

SPIEGEL: You did not attend Husserl's funeral in 1938.

Heidegger: Let me say this. The criticism that I had broken off my ties to Husserl is unfounded. In May, 1933, my wife wrote a letter to Mrs. Husserl in the name of both of us in which we assured them of our unaltered gratitude, and sent this letter with a small bouquet to Husserl. Mrs. Husserl answered briefly with a formal 'thank you' and wrote that the ties betweeen our families were broken. That I failed to express again to Husserl my gratitude and respect for him upon the occasion of his final illness and death is a human failure that I apologized for in a letter to Mrs. Husserl.

SPIEGEL: Husserl died in 1938. Already in February, 1934, you had resigned the rectorate. How did that happen?

Heidegger: Here I have a point to make. In the interest of reorganizing the technical structure of the university, i.e., of renewing the faculties from the inside out in terms of the very substance of their task, I proposed to nominate for the winter semester of 1933-34, younger and, above all, professionally outstanding colleagues to become deans of the individual faculties, and this, indeed, without considering their relationship to the Nazi Party. Thus, Professor Erik Wolf was appointed Dean of the Faculty of Law, Professor Schadewalt of the Philosophy Faculty, Professor Soergel of the Science Faculty, and Professor von Möllendorf, who had been dismissed as Rector the previous spring, of the Medical Faculty. But already by Christmas of 1933 it became clear to me that I would be unable to carry through the pending renewal of the University against either the resistance of the academic community or [the opposition of] the Party. For example, the Faculty reproached me for introducing students into responsible administration of the University—exactly as is done today. One day I was called to Karlsruhe where the Minister, through one of his Councillors, demanded, in the presence of the Student District Leader, that I replace the deans of the legal and medical faculties with other colleagues who were acceptable to the Party. I refused this request and offered my resignation from the rectorate if the Minister insisted on his demand. That's just what happened. This was in February, 1934. I resigned after ten months in office while [other] rectors of that time remained in office for two or more years. While the national and international press commented on my assumption of the rectorate in the most diversified fashion, not a word was said about my resignation.

SPIEGEL: Did you have at that time the opportunity to present your thoughts about university reform to the appropriate government minister?

Heidegger: What time are you referring to?

SPIEGEL: We are referring to the trip that Rust made to Freiburg in 1933.[16]

Heidegger: There were two different occasions involved. On the occasion of the Schlageter celebration in Schönau (Westphalia), I took the initiative of making a short formal call upon the Minister.[17] On a second occasion in November, 1933, I spoke with him in Berlin. I presented to him my conception of science and of the possible restructuring of the faculties. He took careful account of everything that I said, so I nurtured the hope that what I presented to him would have some effect. But nothing happened. I do not see why exception is taken to this exchange with the Party's then Minister of Education, while at the same time all foreign governments were hastening to recognize Hitler and to extend to him the ordinary international signs of respect.

SPIEGEL: Did your relations with the Nazi Party change after you resigned as Rector?

Heidegger: After my resignation, I limited myself to my teaching responsibilities. In the summer semester [204] of 1934, I lectured on "Logic." In the following semester 1934-35, I gave my first course on Hölderlin. In 1936, the Nietzsche courses began.[18] All who could hear at all heard this as a confrontation with National Socialism.

SPIEGEL: How did the transfer of office take place? You took no part in the celebration?

Heidegger: That's right. I refused to take part in the ceremonial transfer of the rectorate.

SPIEGEL: Was your successor a committed member of the Party?

Heidegger: He was a member of the Law Faculty. The party newspaper, *Der Alemanne*, announced his designation as Rector with banner headlines: "The First National Socialist Rector of the University."

SPIEGEL: What position did the Party take toward you?

Heidegger: I was constantly watched.

SPIEGEL: Did you notice this?

Heidegger: Yes—for example, the case of Dr. Hanke.

SPIEGEL: How did you know about it?

Heidegger: He came to me himself. He had just taken his doctorate in the winter semester of 1936-37, and in the summer semester of 1937 he was a member of my advanced seminar. He was sent here from S.S. Security Service to keep watch on me.

SPIEGEL: How did it happen that he suddenly came to you?

Heidegger: On the basis of my Nietzsche seminar in the summer semester of 1937, and the manner in which the work proceeded, he acknowledged to me that he could no longer sustain the role of watchman and wanted to bring the

situation to my attention in the interest of my subsequent teaching.

SPIEGEL: So the Party kept a watchful eye on you?

Heidegger: I knew only that my publications were not allowed to be reviewed, e.g., the essay, "Plato's Doctrine of Truth."[19] The Hölderlin lecture[20] that I gave at the German Institute in Rome in the spring of 1936 was maliciously attacked in the review of the Hitler Youth Movement, *Wille und Macht*. Anyone interested today might read the polemic against me in E. Kriecks' journal, *Volk im Werden*, that began in the summer of 1934. At the International Philosophical Congress in Prague, 1934, I was not one of the German delegates. In like manner, I was excluded from the International Descartes Congress in Paris, 1937. In Paris, this seemed so surprising that the Director of the Congress, Professor Emil Bréhier of the Sorbonne, asked me, of his own accord, why I was not a member of the German delegation. I replied that the administration of the Congress might inquire about the matter at the National Ministry of Education. Shortly afterward, an invitation came to me from Berlin to join the delegation belatedly. I declined. The lectures "What is Metaphysics?" and "On the Essence of Truth"[21] were sold under the counter with jackets that bore no title. After 1934, the rectoral discourse was withdrawn immediately from the bookstores at the instigation of the Party.

SPIEGEL: Did it get even worse later on?

Heidegger: In the last year of the war, 500 of the most important scientists and artists were released from any kind of war service. I was not among them. On the contrary, in the summer of 1944, I was ordered up the Rhine to build fortifications.

SPIEGEL: On the other side of the border, Karl Barth did the same thing for the Swiss.

Heidegger: What is interesting is how this took place. The Rector had invited the entire teaching faculty [to a reception]. He gave a short talk to this effect: he was speaking by special arrangement with both the circle and the district leaders of the Party. [Accordingly,] he would now divide the entire teaching faculty into three groups: first, those who were completely expendable; second, those who were half-expendable; and third, those who were not expendable at all. In the first group of completely expendable was Heidegger, and along with him Gerhard Ritter.[22] In the winter semester of 1944-45, after the termination of the manual labor on the Rhine, I began a course that bore the title, "Poetizing and Thinking." In a certain sense it was a continuation of my Nietzsche courses, i.e., of my confrontation with National Socialism. After the second hour, I was conscripted into the Civil Defense Forces, the oldest member of the teaching body to be called up in this way.

SPIEGEL: To summarize, then: In 1933, as an unpolitical person in the strict sense, if not in the broad sense, you became involved...

Heidegger: ...by way of the University...

SPIEGEL: Yes, by way of and through the Unversity you became involved with the politics of this supposedly new era. After about a year you relinquished the function you had taken over. But in 1935, in a course that in 1953 was published as *Introduction to Metaphysics*, you said: "What today"—this was, therefore, 1935—"is bandied about as the philosophy of National Socialism but has absolutely nothing to do with the inner truth and greatness of this movement (namely, with the encounter between technicity on the planetary level and modern man) casts its net in these troubled waters of 'values' and 'totalities'."[23] Did you add those parenthesized words for the first time in 1953, i.e., at the time of the publication, in order to explain to the reader of 1953, so to speak, in what way you saw the "inner truth and greatness of this movement" (i.e., of National Socialism) in 1935—or did you have this explanatory parenthesis already there in 1935?

Heidegger: The parenthesis stood in my [original] manuscript and corresponded precisely to my conception of technicity at that time, and not yet to the later explication of the essence of technicity as "pos-ure" (*Ge-Stell*).[24] The reason I did not read the phrase publicly [206] was that I was convinced of the proper understanding of my listeners, although stupid people, informers and spies understood it differently—and also wanted to.

SPIEGEL: Surely you would include here the communist movement?

Heidegger: Yes, unquestionably—insofar as that, too is a form of planetary technicity.

SPIEGEL: Americanism also?

Heidegger: Yes, I would say so. Meantime, the last 30 years have made it clearer that the planet-wide movement of modern technicity is a power whose magnitude in determining [our] history can hardly be overestimated. For me today it is a decisive question as to how any political system—and which one—can be adapted to an epoch of technicity. I know of no answer to this question. I am not convinced that it is democracy.

SPIEGEL: But "democracy" is only a collective term that can be conceptualized in many different ways. The question is whether or not a transformation of this political form is still possible. Since 1945, you have commented on the political efforts of the Western World, hence also on democracy, on a politically expressed Christian view of the world (*Weltanschauung*), even on the system of constitutionally guaranteed citizens' rights. All of these efforts you have called "half-way measures."

Heidegger: First of all, please tell me where I have spoken about democracy and the other things you mention. I would indeed characterize them as half-way measures, [though] because I do not see in them any actual confrontation with the world of technicity, inasmuch as behind them all, according to my view, stands the conception that technicity in its essence is something that man holds within his own hands. In my opinion, this is not

possible. Technicity in its essence is something that man does not master by his own power.[25]

SPIEGEL: Which of the trends just sketched out, according to your view, would be most suitable to our time?

Heidegger: I don't see [any answer to] that. But I do see here a decisive question. First of all, it would be necessary to clarify what you mean by "suitable to our time." What is meant here by "time?" Furthermore, the question should be raised as to whether such suitability is the [appropriate] standard for the "inner truth" of human activity, and whether the standard measure of [human] activity is not thinking and poetizing, however heretical such a shift [of emphasis] may seem to be.[26]

SPIEGEL: It is obvious that man is never [complete] master of his tools—witness the case of the Sorcerer's Apprentice. But is it not a little too pessimistic to say: we are not gaining mastery over this surely much greater tool [that is] modern technicity?

Heidegger: Pessimism, no. In the area of the reflection that I am attempting now, pessimism and optimism are positions that don't go far enough. But above all, modern technicity is no "tool" and has nothing at all to do with tools.

SPIEGEL: Why should we be so powerfully overwhelmed by technicity that. . .?

Heidegger: I don't say [we are] "overwhelmed" [by it]. I say that up to the present we have not yet found a way to respond to the essence of technicity.

SPIEGEL: But someone might object very naively: what must be mastered in this case? Everything is functioning. More and more electric power companies are being built. Production is up. In highly technologized parts of the earth, people are well cared for. We are living in a state of prosperity. What really is lacking to us?

Heidegger: Everything is functioning. That is precisely what is awesome, that everything functions, that the functioning propels everything more and more toward further functioning, and that technicity increasingly dislodges man and uproots him from the earth. I don't know if you were shocked, but [certainly] I was shocked when a short time ago I saw the pictures of the earth taken from the moon. We do not need atomic bombs at all [to uproot us]—the uprooting of man is already here. All our relationships have become merely technical ones. It is no longer upon an earth that man lives today. Recently I had a long [209] dialogue in Provence with René Char—a poet and resistance fighter, as you know. In Provence now, launch pads are being built and the countryside laid waste in unimaginable fashion. This poet, who certainly is open to no suspicion of sentimentality or of glorifying the idyllic, said to me that the uprooting of man that is now taking place is the end [of everything human], unless thinking and poetizing once again regain [their] nonviolent power.

SPIEGEL: Well, we have to say that indeed we prefer to be here, and in our age we surely will not have to leave for elsewhere. But who knows if man is determined to be upon this earth? It is thinkable that man has absolutely no determination at all. After all, one might see it to be one of man's possibilities that he reach out from this earth toward other planets. We have by no means come that far, of course—but where is it written that he has his place here?

Heidegger: As far as my own orientation goes, in any case, I know that, according to our human experience and history, everything essential and of great magnitude has arisen only out of the fact that man had a home and was rooted in a tradition. Contemporary literature, for example, is largely destructive.

SPIEGEL: The word "destructive" in this case is bothersome, especially insofar as, thanks to you and your philosophy, the word has been given a comprehensive context of meaning that is nihilistic [in tone]. It is jarring to hear the word "destructive" used with regard to literature, which apparently you are able to see—or are compelled to see—as completely a part of this nihlism.

Heidegger: Let me say that the literature I have in mind is not nihilistic in the sense that I give to that word.

SPIEGEL: Obviously, you see a world movement—this is the way you, too, have expressed it—that either is bringing about an absolutely technical state or has done so already.

Heidegger: That's right.

SPIEGEL: Fine. Now the question naturally arises: Can the individual man in any way still influence this web of fateful circumstance? Or, indeed, can philosophy influence it? Or can both together influence it, insofar as philosophy guides the individual, or several individuals, to a determined action?

Heidegger: If I may answer briefly, and perhaps clumsily, but after long reflection: philosophy will be unable to effect any immediate change in the current state of the world. This is true not only of philosophy but of all purely human reflection and endeavor. Only a god can save us. The only possibility available to us is that by thinking and poetizing we prepare a readiness for the appearance of a god, or for the absence of a god in [our] decline, insofar as in view of the absent god we are in a state of decline.[27]

SPIEGEL: Is there a correlation between your thinking and the emergence of this god? Is there here in your view a causal connection? Do you feel that we can bring a god forth by our thinking?

Heidegger: We can not bring him forth by our thinking. At best we can awaken a readiness to wait [for him].

SPIEGEL: But can we help?

Heidegger: The first help might be the readying of this readiness. It is not

through man that the world can be what it is and how it is—but also not without man. In my view, this goes together with the fact that what I call "Being" (that long traditional, highly ambiguous, now worn-out word) has need of man in order that its revelation, its appearance as truth, and its [various] forms may come to pass. The essence of technicity I see in what I call "pos-ure" (*Ge-Stell*), an often ridiculed and perhaps awkward expression.[28] To say that pos-ure holds sway means that man is posed, enjoined and challenged by a power that becomes manifest in the essence of technicity—a power that man himself does not control. Thought asks no more than this: that it help us achieve this insight. Philosophy is at an end.

SPIEGEL: Yet, nonetheless, in former times (and not only in former times) philosophy was thought to accomplish a great deal indirectly—directly only seldom—but was able indirectly to do much, to help new currents break through. If we think only of the great names of German thought, like Kant and Hegel down through Nietzsche (not to mention Marx), it can be shown that in roundabout ways philosophy has had a tremendous effect. Do you mean now that this effectiveness of philosophy is at an end? And if you say that the old philosophy is dead—that there is no such thing any more, do you also include the thought that this effectiveness of philosophy, if it was ever there in the past, is in our day, at least, no longer there?

Heidegger: A mediated effectiveness is possible through another [kind of] thinking, but no direct one—in the sense that thought will change the world in any causal way, so to speak.

SPIEGEL: Excuse me, we do not wish to philosophize—we are not up to that—but we have here the point of contact between politics and philosophy. That is why you notice that we are drawn into a dialogue of this kind. You have just said that philosophy and the individual would be able to do nothing but...

Heidegger: ....but make ready for this readiness of holding oneself open for the arrival, or for the absence, of a god. Even the experience of this absence is not nothing, but a liberation of man from what in *Being and Time* I call "fallenness" upon beings.[29] Making [ourselves] ready for the aforementioned readiness involves reflecting on what in our own day...is.

SPIEGEL: But for this we still would need, in fact, the well-known stimulus from outside—a god or someone else. Hence, [we are asking:] cannot thought, relying completely on its own resources, have a greater impact today? There was a time when it had an impact—[at least] so thought the contemporaries then, and many of us, I suspect, think so too.

Heidegger: But not immediately.

SPIEGEL: We just mentioned Kant, Hegel and Marx as men who moved [the world]. But even from a Leibniz came stimuli for the development of modern physics and consequently for the emergence of the modern world as such. We believe you said a moment ago that you no longer take account of efficacy of this kind.

Heidegger: Not in the sense of philosophy—not any more.[30] The role of philosophy in the past has been taken over today by the sciences. For a satisfactory clarification of the "efficacy" of [philosophical] thinking we would have to analyze in greater depth what in this case "efficacy" and "having an effect" can mean. Here we would need fundamental distinctions betwen "occasion," "stimulus," "challenge," "assistance," "hinderance" and "cooperation," once we have sufficiently analyzed the "principle of ground ['sufficient reason']." Philosophy [today] dissolves into individual sciences: psychology, logic, political science.

SPIEGEL: And what now takes the place of philosophy?

Heidegger: Cybernetics.

SPIEGEL: Or the pious [one] that holds himself open.[31]

Heidegger: But that is no longer philosophy.[32]

SPIEGEL: What is it then?

Heidegger: I call it another [kind of] thinking.

SPIEGEL: You call it another [kind of] thinking. Would you please formulate that a bit more clearly?

Heidegger: Are you thinking of the sentence with which I closed my lecture, "The Question of Technicity": "Questioning is the piety of thought"?

SPIEGEL: We found a phrase in your Nietzsche courses that was illuminating. You say there: "Because philosophical thinking takes place within the strictest possible bounds, all great thinkers think the same [thing]. But this same [thing] is so essential and rich that no individual ever exhausts it, but rather each [individual] only binds other individuals [to it] the more rigorously." But indeed it is precisely this philosophical edifice that in your opinon apparently has reached a certain termination,

Heidegger: It has reached its term. But it has not become for us [simply] nothing—rather, precisely through dialogue it has become newly present again. My entire work in courses and seminars over the past 30 years was, in the main, only an interpretation of Western philosophy. The return to the historical foundations of thought, the thinking through of those questions that since Greek philosophy still go unasked—this is no abandonment of the tradition. What I do say is this: the manner of thinking of traditional metaphysics that reached its term with Nietzsche offers no further possibility of experiencing in thought the fundamental thrust of the age of technicity that is just beginning.

SPIEGEL: About two years ago in an exchange with a Buddhist monk, you spoke of "a completely new method of thinking" and said that this new method of thinking is, "at first, possible for but few men to achieve." Did you mean to say by this that only very few people can have the insights that in your opinion are possible and necessary?

Heidegger: [Yes, if you take] "have" in the completely original sense that they are able in a certain way to give utterance to [these insights].

SPIEGEL: Fine but the transmission [of these insights] into actualization you did not make apparent even in this dialogue with the Buddhist.

Heidegger: And I cannot make it apparent. I know nothing about how this thought has an "effect." It may be, too, that the way of thought today may lead one to remain silent in order to protect this thought from becoming cheapened within a year. It may also be that it needs 300 years in order to have an "effect."

SPIEGEL: We understand very well. However, since we do not live 300 years hence but here and now, silence is denied us. The rest of us—politicians, half-politicians, citizens, journalists, etc.—must constantly make decisions. We must adapt ourselves to the system in which we live, must seek to change it, must scout out the narrow openings that may lead to reform, and the still narrower openings that may lead to revolution. We expect help from philosophers, even if only indirect help—help in roundabout ways. And now we hear only: I cannot help you.

Heidegger: Well, I can't.

SPIEGEL: That must discourage the nonphilosopher.

Heidegger: I cannot [help you], because the questions are so difficult that it would run counter to the sense of this task of thinking to suddenly step out in public in order to preach and dispense moral censures. Perhaps we may venture to put it this way: to the mystery of the planetary domination of the unthought esssence of technicity corresponds the tentative, unassuming character of thought that strives to ponder this unthought [essence].

SPIEGEL: You do not count yourself among those who, if they would only be heard, could point out a way?

Heidegger: No! I know of no way to change the present state of the world immediately, [even] assuming that such a thing be at all humanly possible. But it seems to me that the thinking that I attempt might be able to awaken, clarify, and confirm [a] readiness [for the appearance of a god] that I have mentioned already

SPIEGEL: A clear answer! But can—and may—a thinker say: [214] just wait—we will think of something within 300 years?

Heidegger: It is not simply a matter of just waiting until something occurs to man within 300 years, but rather to think forward without prophetic claims into the coming time in terms of the fundamental thrust of our present age that has hardly been thought through [at all]. Thinking is not inactivity, but is itself by its very nature an engagement that stands in dialogue with the epochal moment of the world. It seems to me that the distinction between theory and practice comes from metaphysics, and the conception of a transmission between these two blocks the way to insight into what I understand by thinking. Perhaps I may refer to my lectures under the title, "*What is Called Thinking?*" that appeared in 1954.[33] Maybe this, too, is a sign of our time, that of all my publications, this is the least read.

SPIEGEL: Let us return to where we began. Would it not be thinkable that we see National Socialism, on the one hand, as the actualization of this "planetary encounter" and, on the other, as the last, worst, strongest and, at the same time, weakest protest against this encounter between "planetary technicity" and modern man? Obviously you have in your person a [certain] polarity that brings it about that many by-products of your activity are to be explained properly only by the fact that different sides of your nature (that do not touch your philosophical core) cling to many things that as a philosopher you know have no firm base—for example, concepts such as "home," "rootedness" and the like. How do these things go together: planetary technicity and home?

Heidegger: I do not agree. It seems to me that you take technicity in much too absolute [a sense]. I see the situation of man in the world of planetary technicity not as an inextricable and inescapable destiny, but I see the task of thought precisely in this, that within its own limits it helps man as such achieve a satisfactory relationship to the essence of technicity. National Socialism did indeed go in this direction. Those people, however, were far too poorly equipped for thought to arrive at a really explicit relationship to what is happening today and has been underway for the past 300 years.

SPIEGEL: Do the Americans today have this explicit relationship?

Heidegger: They do not have it either. They are still caught up in a thought that, under the guise of pragmatism, facilitates the technical operation and manipulation [of things], but at the same time blocks the way to reflection upon the genuine nature of modern technicity. At the same time, here and there in the USA attempts are being made to become free from pragmatic-positivistic thinking. And who of us would be in a position to decide whether or not one day in Russia or China very old traditions of "thought" may awaken that will help make possible for man a free relationship to the technical world?

SPIEGEL: [But], if none of them has this relationship [now], and the philosopher is unable to give it to them. . . .

Heidegger: How far I come with my own effort at thought and in what way it will be received in the future and fruitfully transformed—this is not for me to decide. In a special lecture on the occasion of the jubilee of the University of Freiburg in 1957, under the title, "The Principle of Identity,"[34] I finally ventured to show in a few steps of thought to what extent there is opened up for man in the age of technicity (insofar as we thoughtfully experience what the genuine nature of technicity is based upon) the possibility of experiencing a relationship to an appeal to which he is not only able to attend but of which he is much rather himself an attendant. My thought stands in an unavoidable relationship to the poetry of Hölderlin. I consider Hölderlin not [just] one poet

among others whose work the historians of literature may take as a theme [for study]. For me, Hölderlin is the poet who points into the future, who waits for a god, and who, consequently, should not remain merely an object of research according to the canons of literary history.

SPIEGEL: Apropos of Hölderlin—we apologize for having to quote again: in your Nietzsche courses you said that "the varied conflict we know between the Dionysian and the Apollonian, between holy passion and sober exposition, is a hidden law of style of the historical determination of the German [people], and one day must find us ready and prepared for it to take its form. This antithesis is not [just] a formula with the help of which we may only describe [our] 'culture.' With this conflict, Hölderlin and Nietzsche have set a question mark in front of the task of Germans to find their essence in an historical way. Will we understand the [question] mark? One thing is certain, history will take its revenge upon us if we do not understand it." We do not know in which year you wrote that, but we guess that it was in 1935.

Heidegger: Probably the citation belongs to the Nietzsche course, "The Will-to-Power as Art," 1936-37.[35] It could date, however, from the following years.

SPIEGEL: Well, could you please explain it? It leads us from the pathway of the general to a concrete determination of the German [people].

Heidegger: The drift of the citation I could also put this way: my conviction is that only in the same place where the modern technical world took its origin can we also prepare a conversion (*Umkehr*) of it. In other words, this cannot happen by taking over Zen-Buddhism or other Eastern experiences of the world. [217] For this conversion of thought we need the help of the European tradition and a new appropriation of it. Thought will be transformed only through thought that has the same origin and determination.

SPIEGEL: You mean, in the same place where the technical world took its origin it also must....

Heidegger: ...be sublated (*aufgehoben*) in the Hegelian sense—not set aside but sublated, though not through man alone.[36]

SPIEGEL: You attribute to the Germans a special task?

Heidegger: Yes, in the sense explained in the dialogues with Hölderlin.

SPIEGEL: Do you believe that Germans have a special qualification for this conversion?

Heidegger: I am thinking of the special inner kinship between the German language and the language of the Greeks and their thought. This is something that the French confirm for me again and again today. When they begin to think, they speak German. They assure [me] that they do not succeed with their own language.

SPIEGEL: Is that how you explain the fact that in the countries of romance languages, especially among the French, you have had such a strong influence?

Heidegger: [It is] because they see that despite all of their great rationality they no longer make a go of it in today's world when it comes to an issue of understanding this world in the origin of its essence. One can no more translate thought than one can translate a poem. At best, one can paraphrase it. As soon as one attempts a literal translation, everything is transformed.

SPIEGEL: A disturbing thought.

Heidegger: It would be good if this disturbance were taken seriously in good measure, and people finally gave some thought to what a portentious transformation Greek thought underwent by translation into the Latin of Rome, an event that even today prevents an adequate reflection upon the fundamental words of Greek thought.

SPIEGEL: Professor, for our part we would like to maintain our optimism that something can be communicated and even translated, for if we should cease to hope that the content of thought can be communicated, even beyond language barriers, then we are left with the threat of provincialism.

Heidegger: Would you characterize Greek thought in distinction from the conceptual style of the Roman Empire as "provincial?" Business letters can be translated into all languages. The sciences, i.e., even for us today the natural sciences (with mathematical physics as the fundamental science), are translatable into all the languages of the world—or, to be exact, they are not translated but the same mathematical language is spoken [universally]. [But] we touch here a broad field that is difficult to cover.

SPIEGEL: Perhaps this is another version of the same theme: at the moment it is no exaggeration [to say that] we have a crisis of the democratic-parliamentary system. We have had it for a long time. We have it especially in Germany, but not in Germany alone. We have it also in the classical lands of democracy like England and America. In France, it is hardly any longer a crisis. The question, then, is this: isn't it possible, after all, that suggestions come from the thinkers (if only as a by-product) either as to how this system may be replaced by a new one and what a new one would look like, or that reform must be possible—together with some indication as to how this reform could be possible. Otherwise, we are left in a situation where the man who is philosophically untutored—and normally this will be one who holds things in his hands (though he does not determine them) and who is himself in the hands of things—we are left in a situation [I say] where such a man arrives at false conclusions, perhaps at frightful short-circuits [of thought]. Therefore, ought not the philosopher be ready [219] to formulate thoughts as to how men may arrange their relations with other men in this world that they themselves have technologized, that perhaps has overwhelmed them? And does he not betray a part, albeit a small part, of his profession and his vocation if he has nothing to say to his fellow men?

Heidegger: As far as I can see, an individual [thinker] is not in a position by reason of his thought to see through the world as a whole in such fashion

as to be able to offer practical advice, and this, indeed, in view of the fact that his first task is to find a basis for thinking itself. For as long as thought takes itself seriously in terms of the great tradition, it is asking too much of thought for it to be committed to offering advice in this way. By what authority could this come about? In the domain of thinking there are no authoritative statements. The only measure for thought comes from the thing itself to be thought. But this is, above all, the [eminently] Questionable. In order to give some insight into the "content" of such thought, it would be necessary to analyze the relationship between philosophy and the sciences, whose technical-practical accomplishments make thought in the philosophical sense seem more and more superfluous. Thus it happens that corresponding to the predicament that thought faces by reason of its own proper task there is an estrangement with regard to thought nourished by the powerful place of the sciences [in our culture]. [That is why] thought is forced to renounce an answer to questions of the day concerning practical matters of *Weltanschauung*....

SPIEGEL: Professor, in the domain of thought there are no authoritative statements. Likewise, it is surely not surprising that modern art, too, has difficulty in making authoritative statements. And yet you call it "destructive." Modern art understands itself often as experimental art. Its works are attempts....

Heidegger: I am glad to be instructed.

SPIEGEL: ...Attempts within a situation where man and the artist are isolated, and [yet] among a hundred efforts every now and again one succeeds.

Heidegger: This is indeed the question: where does art stand? What place does it have?

SPIEGEL: All right, but there you demand something from art that you no longer demand from thought.

Heidegger: I demand nothing from art. I say only that it is a question as to what place it occupies.

SPIEGEL: If art does not know its place, is it therefore destructive?

Heidegger: All right, cross the word out. I would like to observe, however, that I do not see anything about modern art that points out a way [for us]. Moreover, it remains obscure as to how art sees the specific character of art, or at least looks for it.

SPIEGEL: The artist, too, finds nothing in what is handed down to bind him. He can find it beautiful and say: Yes, this is the way someone could paint 600 years ago, or even 30 years ago, but he himself can do it no longer. Even if he wanted to, he could not do it. [If that were possible,] then the greatest artist would be an ingenius imposter [like] Hans van Meegeren, who could paint "better" than [his contemporaries]. But this sort of thing does not work anymore. Thus the artist, the writer, the poet are in a situation similar to that of the thinker. How often must we then say: close your eyes.

Heidegger: If we take as framework for the correlation of art, poetry and philosophy the "culture business"—then the comparison you make is valid. But if not only the "business" character is open to question but also the meaning of "culture," then reflection upon such questionable matters falls, too, within the area of responsibility of thought, whose own distressed condition is not easily thought through. But the greatest need of thought consists in this, that today, so far as I can see, there is still no thinker speaking who is "great" enough to bring thought immediately and in clearly defined form before the heart of the matter [*seine Sache*] and thereby [set it] on its way. For us today, the greatness of what is to be thought is [all] too great. Perhaps the best we can do is strive to break a passage through it— along narrow paths that do not stretch too far.

SPIEGEL: Professor Heidegger, thank you for this interview.

Translated by William J. Richardson, S.J.

Notes

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1. The Nazis came to power January 30, 1933. Heidegger was elected Rector of the University of Freiburg in May, 1933. At issue, therefore, is his relation to Nazism before, during and after his tenure as Rector.
2. Heidegger's favorite retreat was a small wooden hut at Todtnauberg in the Black Forest, not far from Freiburg.
3. In the German universities at that time, the summer semester began in late April and lasted until late July. The winter semester began in early November and lasted until early February.
4. Presumably one of the many forms of the Jewish boycott (e.g., *Juden unerwünscht*; "Jews unwelcome here!") already underway 3 months after Hitler's assumption of power.
5. The Social Democrats were one of the oldest of Germany's political parties and one of the most influential during the Weimar Republic.
6. The S.A. (*Sturmabteilung*) were the "Stormtroopers" or "Brownshirts."
7. Translated by David Farrell Krell in Martin Heidegger, *Basic Writings*, ed. D.F. Krell (New York: Harper and Row, 1977), pp. 91-112, at p. 96 (my translation).
8. The new Rector followed the time-honored custom of making a formal public address when he took office. Entitling his address "The Self-Assertion of the German University" (Breslau: Korn, 1933), Heidegger urged the academic community to assume its responsibility before the nation in the service of science—"service by labor," "service under arms," "service through knowledge." Some found a parallel for this conception of "service" in Plato's *Republic*. Others found it to be a complete

capitulation to the Nazis. Hence, the pursuit here of the apparently Nazist implications of the address.

9. *Spiegel* note: The passage appeared in the review, *Die Erziehung*, edited by A. Fischer, W. Flitner, Th. Litt, H. Nohl and E. Spranger (1933), p. 401.
10. Translated by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper and Row, 1962.) This was Heidegger's first major—and still most important—work. In it he raised the question that has pervaded all of his subsequent efforts: what is the meaning of Being?
11. The allusion is obscure. Perhaps the interviewer means: "after the manner of the oracle at Delphi," i.e., in a manner that was deliberately enigmatic and evasive—so that the hearer could interpret what was said in whatever way he wished. But the the word should be *Delphicas*, and the phrase as it stands would be simply a pedantic malapropism. Other possible explanations of the phrase are less probable and even more esoteric.
12. I.e., the specialized reference library in the seminar rooms of the Philosophy Department.
13. Erich Mühsam, 1874-1934, was a German poet, playwright and anarchist, who died in a concentration camp in 1934.
14. Translated by Peter D. Hertz (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), p. 199. The dedication in question has been restored in subsequent editions.
15. Publisher of the German editions of *Being and Time*.
16. Bernhard Rust had been a Nazi Party member and friend of Hitler since the early 'twenties and was named Reich Minister of Science, Education and Popular Culture shortly after Hitler assumed office.
17. Albert Leo Schlageter (1894-1923) was shot by the French for his role in the resistance to the French occupation of the Ruhr.
18. In his "Logic" course, Heidegger addressed the fundamental nature of thought, particularly in terms of its relationship to language. In meditating on Hölderlin, he reflected on the nature of language as it appears in poetry. The Nietzsche courses dealt with Nietzsche's thought as the dénouement of metaphysics in the West.
19. Translated by John Barlow, in *Philosophy in the Twentieth Century*, edited by William Barrett and H.D. Aiken (New York: Random House, 1962). Vol. II, pp. 251-270.
20. "Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry," translated by Douglas Scott, in *Existence and Being*, edited by Werner Brock (Chicago: Regnery-Gateway, 1969), pp. 270-291.
21. Translated by John Sallis in *Basic Writings*, pp. 117-141.
22. Gerhard Ritter was at that time Professor of Modern History at the University of Freiburg and, on November 1, 1944, was arrested in connection with the attempt on Hitler's life, July 20, 1944. He was imprisoned, and released by the Allied forces, April 25, 1945.
23. Translated by Ralph Manheim (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday Anchor, 1961). By "technicity," Heidegger means more than just "technology." He uses the term to characterize *the manner in which Being manifests itself* in the present epoch of the world, acccording to which man experiences the beings around him as objects that can be submitted to his control. It is as a consequence of this experience that "technology" becomes possible. Technicity for Heidegger is "planetary" in the sense that this revelation of Being is planet-wide and affects every aspect of man's relationship to, and on, the planet where he finds himself.
24. By 1953, when *Introduction to Metaphysics* was first published, Heidegger had already begun to describe technicity in terms of its essence (i.e., as a manner in which Being is revealed—and concealed) by the neologism, *Ge-stell*. Although the word *Gestell* ("frame," "stand," "chassis") is found in ordinary German, Heidegger is using it in completely idiosyncratic fashion to signify the collective way (suggested by the prefix, *Ge-*) in which beings are experienced by man as in one way or another "posed" (various forms of *-stellen*) to, by and for man (e.g., "com-posed," "contra-posed," "pro-posed," etc.), and thus conceivably subject to his control. The original usage by Heidegger is enigmatic for all but initiated Germans. It is untranslatable by any single English word—"pos-ure" here is at best an equally neologistic—and probably futile—approximation. See "Die Frage nach der Technik," *Vorträge und Aufsätze* (Pfullingen: Neske, 1954), pp. 13-44. An English translation by William Lovitt has come forth under the title *"The Question concerning Technology" and other Essays* (New York: Harper and Row, 1977).
25. Since technicity for Heidegger is in its essence the manner in which Being reveals itself through beings to man, man does not control it (i.e., master it by his own power) but at best can do no more than respond to it appropriately.
26. "Thinking" for Heidegger means more than merely intellectual activity—it involves an authentic response of the whole man to the revelation of Being. As such, it is non-conceptual and non-representational—a total, accepting openness to Being. Likewise, "poetizing" means more than simply writing "poetry" or the "poetic arts" in any ordinary sense—it means bringing the revelation of Being into appropriate language.
27. In all probability, Heidegger is not using the word "god" here in any personal sense but in the sense that he gives to the word (often in the expression, "god or the gods") in his interpretations of Hölderlin, i.e., as the concrete manifestation of Being as "the Holy."
28. See note 23.
29. I.e., the tendency to become absorbed in beings to the disregard of Being that reveals itself in and through them.
30. Heidegger is using the word "philosophy" here to designate the metaphysical tradition of the West that he sees as beginning with Plato and ending with Nietzsche. He sees it as interrogating the nature of beings (either in general or in terms of their ultimate ground in a "supreme" being). His own interest is in interrogating the meaning of Being itself, which he experiences as the source of light by which beings are illumined as what they are and which therefore lies at the foundation of metaphysics. Hence, he calls his effort at various times "foundational," or "re-collective," or "interrogative," or simply (as below) "another" kind of thinking. It would be the task of such a thought to interrogate the essence of technicity as a manner in which Being manifests itself in the present epoch of the world.
31. The allusion is to the way Heidegger concluded one of his essays, "The Question of Technicity," with a phrase that since then has become famous: "Questioning is the piety of thought." (*Vorträge und Augsätze*, Pfullingen: Neske, 1954), p. 44. Cf. *The Question Concerning Technology*. . . ,p. 34.
32. I.e., in the sense of the traditional metaphysics of the West.
33. Translated by Fred D. Wieck and J. Glenn Gray (New York: Harper and Row, 1968).
34. Translated by Joan Stambaugh (New York: Harper and Row, 1969).
35. *Nietzsche* (Pfullingen: Neske, 1961). Vol. I, pp. 11-254.
36. I.e., assumed and integrated on a higher level.